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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5537  
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 0184  
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY 0257  
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 1155  
RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY 0424  
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 000927

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STATE FOR EUR/RPM (E. SHINAGEL), USNATO (P. CHISHOLM), OSD  
(D. DES ROCHES)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/26/2016

TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/NATO: DUTCH ON NATO MIDDLE EAST  
SECURITY COOPERATION CENTER

REF: STATE 63202

Classified By: Political Counselor Andrew Schofer, reasons 1.4 (b,d)

11. (C) Summary: The Dutch support the principal of the NATO Middle East Security Cooperation Center, but remain convinced that Africa is "equally important." They are prepared to join consensus -- should one emerge -- to move forward on plans to first create the Middle East Security Cooperation Center at the April 27-28 Foreign Ministerial in Sofia, but intend to argue forcefully for at least some mention of Africa in any decision documents/public statements to ensure the continent is not forgotten. They are willing to be flexible with regard to the timing, as long as NATO commits to enhancing training in Africa. MFA Director for Security Policy Robert De Groot discussed reftel points with Polcouns on April 26. Polmiloff discussed reftel points separately with MFA Deputy Head of the NATO Section Eric Strating on April 24. End Summary.

12. (C) De Groot said that the Dutch support the Middle East security cooperation center, but believe equal emphasis should be placed on NATO training in Africa. Polcouns recognized Dutch concerns, but asked if they would prevent the Dutch from joining a possible consensus on moving forward with plans to first create a training center in the Middle East. De Groot replied that the Dutch would join a consensus -- should one emerge -- but some mention should be made of Africa at Sofia -- "Africa should not be forgotten," he said. De Groot acknowledged that it was probably not practical to move forward in both regions simultaneously and stressed that the Dutch could be flexible on "timing" as long as there is a clear commitment by NATO to enhance training efforts in Africa.

13. (C) In a separate conversation, Strating told Polmiloff on April 24 that the Dutch think the security cooperation center is a "good idea". He was receptive to both the possibility of using mobile training units from the NATO School in Oberammergau for immediate dividends, and that Middle East countries interested in hosting the center should invite NATO teams to evaluate their offers.

14. (C) However, Strating said the Dutch are concerned that

too much emphasis is being placed on the Middle East at the expense of Africa. Strating noted that NATO SYG de Hoop Scheffer's initiative called for training in both the Middle East and Africa. The Dutch would like to see more efforts in Africa, he said, and do not agree with the "longer term approach" advocated by the USG. Strating questioned whether African countries would be eligible to use the Middle East training center.

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